

Page 3, line 17, after "such" insert -- as --;

Page 9, line 10², replace "believe" with -- believed --;

Page 10, line 8, delete "The architectural parameters.";

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend Claims 2-7, 14-17, and 28; and add New Claims 31-33; as follows:

- SUB3*
- AM*
2. (Amended) The protective coating of Claim 1 wherein the at least one inner layer includes [including] a plurality of [inner ceramic] bilayers.
 3. (Amended) The protective coating of Claim 2 wherein the ceramic material for the at least one inner layer[s are] is selected from the group consisting of zirconia, titania and alumina.
 4. (Amended) The protective coating of Claim 1 wherein the water swellable ceramic material forms a hydrate or hydroxide in the presence of an oxygen containing environment.
 5. (Amended) The protective coating of Claim 2 wherein the water swellable ceramic material is selected from the group consisting of alumina, zirconia, [or] and hafnia containing [based] components.
 6. (Amended) The protective coating of Claim 5 wherein the water swellable ceramic material is a nitride of material selected from the group consisting of [aluminum nitride] alumina, [zirconium nitride] zirconia, and [hafnium nitride] hafnia.
 7. (Amended) The protective coating of Claim 1 wherein the individual layers are about one to about 100 nanometers thick.

14. (Amended) The coating of Claim 1 wherein the at least one layer includes a plurality of nano-scale ceramic layers independently forming a hardness-imparting ceramic module and a toughness-imparting ceramic module [first module has a thickness in the range from about 1 to about 100 nm].

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15. (Amended) The coating of Claim 1 wherein the [second module has a thickness in the range] each of the hardness-imparting and the toughness-imparting modules has a thickness independently ranging from about 1 to about 100 nm.

16. (Amended) The coating of Claim 1 wherein the outer layer [third module] has a thickness in the range from about 1 to about 100 nm.

17. (Amended) A nanostructure protective coating for a substrate, the coating comprising a plurality of nano-scale ceramic layers including at least one bilayer formed of different material [comprising at least two components] selected from the group consisting of zirconia, titania, alumina, and aluminum nitride.

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28. (Amended) An intracorporeal implant, comprising a substrate selected from the group consisting of metals, polymers, and a combination thereof and having a protective coating thereon which has an outermost coating layer comprising a compound capable of forming a hydrate or hydroxide compound upon contact with an oxygen containing environment.

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-- 31. (NEW) The protective coating of Claim 1 wherein the outer layer is formed of a nano-crystalline water swellable material. --

-- 32. (NEW) The protective coating ^Bof Claim 1 wherein the at least one layer is formed of nano-crystalline ceramic material. --